

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS ROME 003684

SIPDIS

AIDAC FROM U.S. MISSION IN ROME

STATE FOR PRM/P AND IO/EDA
USAID FOR DCHA/FFP/D LANDIS
USDA/FAS FOR CHAMBLISS/TILSWORTH/GAINOR
BRUSSELS FOR USAID PLERNER AND PRM REP
GENEVA FOR USAID/NKYLOH

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [EAGR](#) [PREF](#) [AORC](#) [WFP](#) [UN](#)
SUBJECT: WFP EMERGENCY (EMOP) APPEAL FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

REF: (A) HARARE 01534, (B) HARARE 01316, and (C) HARARE 01345

Summary

1. The US Mission in Rome draws your attention to the special appeal recently made by the Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) for donor support to WFP's new emergency operation (EMOP) for Southern Africa covering the period from July 2003 through June 2004. The food aid appeal is valued at U.S. Dollars 308 million. End summary.

Discussion

2. WFP's EMOP 10290.00, valued at U.S. Dollars (USD) 308 million and involving the provisioning of almost 540,000 tons of food commodities, provides targeted relief aid to 6.5 million people in 6 countries of southern Africa, namely, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

3. Recently completed FAO and WFP crop and food supply assessment missions that found significant shortfalls in cereal production confirm the need for continued support to the region. In addition, the impact of HIV/AIDS is exacerbating food insecurity in all 6 countries.

4. The EMOP will address the transitional needs of populations unable to recover their coping mechanisms and resume productive livelihoods. Assistance will be provided through targeted family rations, and particularly vulnerable individuals will be reached thorough their participation in safety-net activities, food for work and food for training activities.

5. WFP's appeal is being fully integrated into the United Nations Consolidated Appeal for Southern Africa. In addition, UN and inter-agency collaboration has been improved by the recent strengthening of the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination and Support Office (RIACSO), sharing offices with the WFP regional bureau in Johannesburg, attending coordination meetings with NGOs, and maintaining regular contact with the Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-SAFE). In addition, WFP continues to work closely with the SADC regional vulnerability assessment committee, particularly in the analysis of factors contributing to regional food insecurity.

6. Despite some carryover contributions from the regional EMOP 10200.00, many of the commodities will not arrive for distribution until next year. As a result, because serious distribution shortfalls will begin to occur in September, WFP requests urgently needed confirmed contributions, ideally cash contributions, now.

7. The project document for this appeal is found on the WFP website. Further details are as follows:

- Data from the CFSAM and VAC assessments forecast an increase in cereal production from 5.4 million metric tons (MT) in 2001/02 to approximately 6.5 million MT in 2002/03 in the 6 EMOP countries. Nevertheless, a cereals gap of about 2.4 million MT is projected for 2003/04.
- HIV/AIDS continues to follow from and generate food insecurity. Those who are vulnerable to malnutrition are more susceptible to HIV/AIDS, while households that lose breadwinners to HIV/AIDS are more susceptible to food shortages. The overwhelming majority of people infected with HIV/AIDS are between 15 and 49, their most productive years. Throughout the region the number of newly orphaned children and households headed by the chronically ill are on the rise. Therefore, food aid is critically important in bolstering the lives of those infected with HIV/AIDS.

- In Lesotho, food production for 2002/03 at the national level has improved from the immediately preceding years. HIV/AIDS prevalence among adults is about 31 percent, and

the numbers of new orphans (about 73,000 in 2001 alone) and ill-equipped child farmers are mounting.

- In Malawi, poor weather has affected up to 200,000 families, the most vulnerable of which lack adequate purchasing power to meet minimum nutritional requirements. The chronic malnutrition rate is 49 percent.

- Mozambique has experienced significant crop failures following the worst rains in 50 years and a second consecutive year of drought. In some areas, often because logistics challenges ensure that little food reaches the most vulnerable populations, the acute malnutrition among children from 6 to 59 months has reached the alarming rate of 11.2 percent.

- Swaziland is experiencing important disparities in food production. Near-eradication of the local cash crop, cotton, and reduced employment opportunities in South African mines have led to severe drops in family purchasing power. Swaziland has the second highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the world, and statistical projections show life expectancy dropping to below 30 years by 2010 if current HIV/AIDS trends continue.

- In Zambia, chronic malnutrition is estimated at 53 percent, one of the highest rates in the world, and life expectancy has dropped to 32 years.

- Zimbabwe is facing enormous food security challenges, which include HIV/AIDS, crop failures, and collapsing markets. Note: Please refer to US Embassy Harare Reftels A, B, and C related to Zimbabwe's crisis and suggested USG course of action. End note.

18. The objectives of the WFP emergency operation are to prevent severe food shortages, safeguard the nutritional well-being of vulnerable segments of the population, and preserve, build and restore social structures, human and productive assets and safety nets.

19. WFP's EMOP for Southern Africa can be found on its website at www.wfp.org. Hall

NNNN

2003ROME03684 - Classification: UNCLASSIFIED